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The Committee for National Security

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June 5, 1981

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
President
Rockefeller University
New York, NY 10021

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Three important reasons lead me to write to you today:

- o to share with you the results of our recent Roper poll -- findings that support our conviction about the need for the Committee for National Security;
- o to call to your attention a recent article that demonstrates the Committee's ability to influence the debate on national security issues and to let you know of our continuing efforts on the arms control issue;
- o to ask for your personal support and immediate financial help to continue this urgent work.

Our Committee commissioned the Roper Organization to include key questions on national security in its standard nationwide sample. The findings confirm our assumption that there is currently no consensus on national security issues and that leadership must be provided to develop a recognition of what true national security means. Over one-half (53%) of the national sample believe that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. do not need more atomic weapons. Over two-fifths (42%) think that an arms race increases the likelihood of an all-out war. To insure national security, nearly half the national sample (48%) chose to stress economic and diplomatic measures -- a significantly greater percentage than chose to stress military means (41%).

Perhaps more important, the Roper survey underscores the Committee's basic premise that the American public recognizes the complexity of national security issues and is receptive to a sophisticated and balanced discussion of the issues. The study also suggests that the "military mandate" -- largely unquestioned in the recent budget debates -- may indeed be a myth.

The enclosed article on military spending illustrates our Committee's effectiveness in promoting a national security debate through the media. When the Reagan Administration announced its intention to increase the defense budget, we arranged for U.S. News and World Report to interview our national Committee

member and Nobel Laureate economist, Wassily Leontief. That interview, which ran the very week that the Reagan budget was released, was then picked up by the Washington Post and used to support a wider examination of defense spending. This is precisely the kind of thoughtful dialogue that the Committee for National Security was formed to promote.

Instead of speculating about how we got off the arms control track, we are finding ways to get back on it again. This month our Arms Control Agenda for the Eighties task force will release its first white paper. A number of public events around that release will set before the American people a series of tough questions and will present our own research and proposals for reducing the threat of nuclear war.

Among the questions we will be asking are:

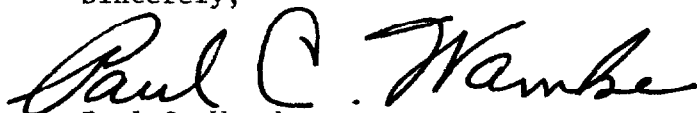
- o Will Americans permit themselves to be persuaded that nuclear war is an acceptable idea?
- o Will Americans accept the concept of "limited," "survivable" nuclear war?
- o Will Americans reject the promise of the SALT II Treaty and continuation of the SALT process?
- o Will Americans forfeit the chance to win a comprehensive test ban treaty?
- o Will Americans trade necessary domestic programs to stockpile redundant weapons of mass destruction?

The answers to these questions rest largely with you. I need hardly tell you that all the activities I have mentioned -- sophisticated polling and public education, political analysis and research, task forces and press conferences -- cost money. We all know it, and we also know that support for issues like national security must begin with that small group of American leaders that is already committed to our goals and wants to see us succeed. I believe you are one of these people.

I wanted you to know of this work first-hand because of your concern about these issues. I know you will share my pride in learning that our Committee is indeed delivering on its promise and launching an effective program.

We need your support and we need it now if the Committee is to continue the important work it has begun. I am asking you to contribute \$250 or more so that we can proceed with our program, so that we can succeed in shaping a new national security. Our future depends on it.

Sincerely,


Paul C. Warnke
Chairman